

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 55

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24—Relative to the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Acts of 2011 and 2012.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 18, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 24, Bonilla. Proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Acts of 2011 and 2012.

This measure would urge the members of California's congressional delegation to sign on as cosponsors of, and request that the Congress and the President of the United States enact, the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 or the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012.

WHEREAS, The American Academy of Pediatrics emphasizes the crucial role school nurses have in the seamless provision of comprehensive health services to children and youth, as well as in the development of a coordinated school health program; and

WHEREAS, The school nurse functions as a leader and the coordinator of the school health services team, facilitating access to a medical home for each child and supporting school achievement; and

WHEREAS, The school nurse is often the only health care provider that a child has and can ensure that basic health needs are met; and

WHEREAS, Recent national data indicates 45 percent of public schools have a school nurse all day, every day, while another 30 percent of schools have a school nurse who works part time in one or more schools; and

WHEREAS, There is just one school nurse for every 2,172 pupils in California, which is well below the national standard of one nurse for every 750 pupils. There are no school nurses at all in 15 California counties; and

WHEREAS, The dearth of nurses has left many schools struggling to cope with rising rates of childhood illnesses such as asthma, food allergies, diabetes, and seizure disorders; and

WHEREAS, The American Nurses Association has reported that, when there is no registered nurse on the school premises, the responsibility to administer the necessary medications and treatments, and to carry out appropriate monitoring of the children, falls on the shoulders of administrators, educators, and staff, who are ill-prepared to perform these tasks; and

WHEREAS, Statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics indicate that, of the 52,000,000 children who currently spend their day in

schools, 16 percent have chronic physical, emotional, or other health problems; and

WHEREAS, A recent study indicated that from 2002 to 2008, inclusive, the percentage of children in special education with health impairments, due to chronic or acute health problems, increased 60 percent. Within this group the rate of autism has doubled since 2002; and

WHEREAS, A 40-percent increase in asthma has been seen in the past 10 years, along with a nearly 50-percent increase in the incidence of diabetes in the same time period; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 10 percent of schoolage children in California suffer from asthma; and

WHEREAS, According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, students today face increased social issues as well as the need for preventative services and interventions for acute and chronic health issues; and

WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the percentage of children without health insurance was 8.9 percent in 2008, and with over 1,300,000 homeless children in the United States, schools have become the only source of health care for many children and adolescents; and

WHEREAS, Communicable and infectious diseases account for millions of school days lost each year. There is reported evidence that school nurses have a positive impact on immunization rates, with fewer parent-requested exemptions; and

WHEREAS, A recent study showed that students with health concerns attended to by school nurses were able to return to class 95 percent of the time, while students attended to by unlicensed staff were only able to return to class 82 percent of the time; and

WHEREAS, The presence of a school nurse leads to increases in student attendance and the units of average daily attendance that a school district may claim; and

WHEREAS, Using a formula-based approach for determining a balanced student-to-school nurse ratio offers a reasonable means for achieving better outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229) and the federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047) have been introduced in Congress with the purpose of reducing the student-to-school nurse ratio in public elementary schools and secondary schools; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature respectfully urges the members of California's congressional delegation to sign on as cosponsors of the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229) or the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047); and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature respectfully requests that the Congress and the President of the United States enact the federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229) or the federal

Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047); and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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